Summary
Comprehensive Program Review
BFA in Theatre
Valdosta State University

Comprehensive Program Review in the University System of Georgia requires that programs be evaluated under the following three categories: (1) Viability; (2) Productivity, and (3) Quality.

VIABILITY (Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.03.05)—the use of such considerations as available resources, student interest, career opportunities, and contributions to the goals and mission of the institution, University System, and state to determine whether a program should be continued as is or modified (expanded, curtailed, or eliminated). Viability considerations are independent of quality measurements; i.e. high quality program could lack viability, or a program in need of considerable improvement could have a high viability.

According to the program review, the Theatre Program contributes to the goals and mission of the University training students who are prepared to enter the theatre industry upon graduation. Student interest appears high, with a three-year average of 23 graduates and 126 majors. The recently approved Dance Minor and proposed Musical Theatre Emphasis, may over time result, in an increase in number of majors and graduates from the program. The addition of Dance and Musical Theatre Voice faculty are forward steps in improving its viability. An area of concern is the great demand on current resources – staff and space particularly.

PRODUCTIVITY (Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.03.05)—the number and contributions of graduates of an academic program and/or the number of students served through service courses in the context of the resources committed to its operation. (Additional measures of productivity might include counts of students who meet their educational goals through the program's offerings, including minors, certificates, or job enhancement, if such goals are part of the program's mission.)

According to its program review, the Theatre Program is productive, meeting the standards of the average number of graduates. The service courses (THEA 1000, THEA 1100, DANC 1500, PERS 2380) are often filled to capacity. The aggressive production season of seven fully realized productions annually results in a large number of opportunities for the Program's students and for outside stakeholders to visit the University. The University's summer theatre is lead by Program faculty with participation from other faculty and students. This professional extension of the degree-training program adds to the Program's productivity for faculty, students and audience members.

QUALITY (Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.03.05)—measure of excellence. Quality indicators may include, but are not limited to, attainment of student outcomes, a comparison of program elements relative to internal and external benchmarks, resources, certification results, placement in graduate schools, job placement, and awards and honors received by the program), and other standards.

According to the program review, the Theatre Program is a high quality program. The program is nationally accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre. Additionally, the Program was the first academic program to receive a Board of Regents Excellence in Teaching Award. Attendance at the Program's productions is high, indicating outside stakeholders' view of the quality of these productions. Increases in outside support in season and production sponsorships are evidence of perceived quality by the community.

AREAS of CONCERN

VSU Theatre's program review reveals the following areas of concern:

The aggressive production season, while a great recruiting tool and source of income, has stretched the production faculty to its limits. Increased support staff, the addition of a full-time shop foreperson and the conversion of the costume shop supervisor from part-time to full-time, would be a major benefit to the program. This concern was supported in the NAST Visitors' Report.

Rigging and safety issues of the theatres, particularly Sawyer Theatre, and the establishing of regular maintenance, repair/replacement schedules of equipment used in the shops and theatres are concerns to be addressed. These concerns too, were included in the NAST Visitors' Report.

With the addition of a third dance faculty person in a single dance studio, scheduling classes and rehearsals will become increasingly challenging. Similarly, the NAST Visitors' Report indicated the current limited number of rehearsal/performance spaces for the program's production schedule and students' class projects coupled with potential increase in majors and minors, the program could soon be in a facility crisis.

While the addition of a musical theatre voice faculty member should result, over time, in improvements in the quality of students' auditions and graduates, it is a position in any university setting that generates a very limited number of FTE's. It is imperative that this be seen as unique and be supported by the administration.

ACTION PLAN:

New faculty lines in Dance and Musical Theatre address, largely if not completely, concerns of the proposed minor and major in dance and the concerns of NAST of the proposed Musical Theatre Emphasis.

Place Sawyer Theatre Rigging as an initiative in area and departmental planning documents.

Investigate the procedures and net results of adding an audition/interview to the admissions process.